

SOCIAL ACTION NEWS-LETTER

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SELECTIVE SERVICE BROADENS BASIS OF PRE-THEOLOGICAL EXEMPTION

Confronted with protests from many Protestant bodies presented by the Federal Council of Churches, Selective Service on May 13 revised its regulations governing exemption of students preparing for the Christian ministry. Under pressure from the armed forces for men to fill quotas and from Congress to defer fathers, Selective Service in April cancelled previous regulations which permitted pre-theological students to be given II-A classification pending their entry into the seminary. The only exception was in the case of men who would complete their undergraduate work in June, 1944 and enter theological school not later than July first. Confronted with a ruling that threatened to cut off the entire supply of Protestant ministers, church colleges, theological seminaries and denominational officials took action.

The new regulations provide that any student for the Christian ministry who is preparing for the ministry in a theological or divinity school which has been recognized as such for more than one year prior to the enactment of the Selective Service Act (September 16, 1940, or who has been accepted for admittance to a theological or divinity school and is pursuing a full-time course of study on an accelerated basis required by the theological or divinity school in which he has been accepted for admittance, and who has been accepted by the highest authority governing ordination of a recognized church, religious sect, or religious organization, shall be classified IV-D—that of a theological student, exempt from military service, but subject to registration. In less technical terms it means that any young man who has been approved as a candidate for the Christian ministry by the highest ordaining body within his communion and who is enrolled in a recognized college, pursuing a course of study prescribed by a theological or divinity school in which he has been accepted for admittance upon completion of undergraduate work, shall be given the same classification as though he were already in theological school.

In order to secure such classification the student must supply to his board the following information:

1. A statement from the student himself showing that he is preparing for and intends to enter into the ministry of a recognized church, religious sect, or religious organization.

2. A statement from the highest authority governing ordination in his church, that it is in need of ministers and that he has been formally accepted as a candidate for the ministry.

3. A statement from a recognized theological or divinity school that the applicant has been accepted for admittance and that he is pursuing under its general direction, on a full-time and accelerated basis, a specific course of study required by said theological or divinity school, the statement to show the course of study in detail.

Selective Service has made up a list of approved

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CONVOCATIONS REVEAL WIDE INTEREST IN WORLD ORDER

Reports brought back by team members who served as speakers in the recent series of twelve Convocations held throughout the brotherhood during the latter part of April and the month of May indicate widespread interest on the part of Disciples everywhere in the Drake Conference and work of the Commission on World Order. More than 600 copies of "The Church and the New World Mind," the book containing the lectures delivered at the Drake Conference, were sold in the meetings and sales of the Study Guide were in proportion. In every conference the session devoted to world order was well attended and deep interest was manifested. Throughout the entire series there was a demand that the Commission on World Order be given adequate funds and personnel to fulfill its purpose to arouse the Disciples of Christ to do their part in bringing about a peace that is just and durable.

The Commission on World Order will meet at the Indianapolis Athletic Club on Thursday, June 1st to plan its program for the fiscal year 1944-45. High on the agenda is the re-organization of the personnel of the commission itself in order to secure wider brotherhood participation. There are many who feel that the task is one that will require from ten to fifteen years and that the commission ought to be set up accordingly. In addition to the question of budget and personnel, there will be the matter of program to be considered. The Methodists have recently carried out a nationwide visitation to their churches in their "Bishops' Crusade," seeking to enlist 8,000,000 of their members. The Congregational Christian Council for Social Action is sponsoring a "Mayflower Compact," dealing with world order, in which individual church members are asked to enter a new "Mayflower Compact" to work for a world organized along the lines of peace and justice. The Commission on a Just and Durable Peace of the Federal Council of Churches is concentrating its energies on its "Six Pillars of Peace," while planning for another "Delaware Conference" to be called some time in January, 1945.

In the meantime, the Commission on World Order is stressing study of the issues raised at the Drake Conference through the use of the Study Guide, "The Church and the New World Mind," the "Six Pillars of Peace," and various other materials. Study groups have already been organized in many churches, while others have it in their fall and winter programs. The subject has been to the fore in the spring conventions and will be one of the main subjects of study in young peoples and adult summer conferences. It is expected that renewed effort will be made to secure study classes in every church in the brotherhood during the coming fall and winter and that local committees on world order will be sponsored. Efforts will be made to enlist state missionary societies, local mission study groups and the boards of officers of local congregations in the enterprise. Among suggestions made is for a poll of the churches to discover what Disciples are thinking and what sort of post-war world they want.

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METHODIST VOTE TO SUPPORT CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS

Despite reversal by the General Conference meeting in Kansas City in May of the position taken by the 1940 General conference declaring that "The Methodist Church . . . will not officially endorse support or participate in war," approval was given to the Episcopal Message submitted by Bishop Arthur J. Moore, of Atlanta, Georgia, from the Council of Bishops, which contained the following statement regarding Methodist conscientious objectors:

"The Methodist Church has declared its purpose to defend those of our number who cannot in good conscience participate in war. We will not be driven from that position by hysteria which always develops in a time of struggle. The principles of democracy and the teachings of the Christian religion accord men freedom of conscience. The conscientious refusal to bear arms is for some persons a natural expression of their desire for peace on earth. To all members of The Methodist Church who are conscientious objectors seeking exemption from military service, the church must continue to give its moral protection."

On May 1, 1944 there were approximately 600 Methodist conscientious objectors assigned to various forms of Civilian Public Service. Dr. Charles F. Boss, Jr., executive secretary of The Commission on World Peace, reports that the total cost of maintaining Methodist C. Os. in Civilian Public Service as of January 1, 1944, was \$261,443.76, on which account payments had been made to the camp operating agencies amounting to \$118,642.44, leaving a balance of \$142,801.32. Dr. Boss estimates that it will require an additional \$118,800.00 to meet obligations that will accrue during the year 1944. The statement of the Council of Bishops will no doubt give The Commission on World Peace considerable assistance in its efforts to secure needed funds.

Reversal of the church's previous stand was accomplished by a vigorous campaign among the delegates to overthrow the report of the committee on the state of the church, which recommended that the 1940 declaration be re-affirmed. In spite of the efforts made by a lay delegate from New York and a well known Canadian minister, and a decision to take the vote of lay and clerical delegates separately, the reversal was approved by a margin of only one vote among the ministers and 72 lay votes. Lest the action be regarded as a withdrawal of the moral support of the church from Methodist conscientious objectors, a ruling was obtained from the judicial commission that such was not the case.

AFL PREPARES FOR POST-WAR RECONSTRUCTION

A comprehensive plan of post-war international organization and national economic reconstruction is outlined in the recommendations of the Post-War Reconstruction Committee of the American Federation of Labor to the 1000 delegates of labor unions in New York on April 12. The guiding principles of the report are:

"1. *War is the enemy.* The American Federation of Labor believes that war among the nations waged by the modern engines of death and destruction is the supreme enemy of the well-being of the common people of the world. . . . We consider that the elimination of war as an instrument of national policy is a condition essential to the perpetuation and further development of our democratic way of life.

"2. *Lasting peace must rest on social justice and include all people.* . . . We are in full accord with the way in which (this principle) is elaborated in the Atlantic Charter and the Four Freedoms We note with satisfaction the declaration . . . at Teheran . . . : 'We shall seek the cooperation . . . of all nations . . . whose peoples in heart and in mind are dedicated . . . to the elimination of tyranny and slavery, oppression and intolerance. We will welcome them as they may choose to come into the world family of democratic nations.'

"3. *The only safety from war is in the international organization of peace.* The industry of war has been taken over by modern science more completely than the industries of peace. . . . The conflicts of today have proved that we can no longer rely on our favored geographical position to maintain our national safety. Moreover, the vast majority of workers in our country realize what it would mean to respond to this changed situation by engaging in that rivalry for power which is inherent in any effort to make ourselves secure through a program of national expansion and militarism. The outcome of such a policy is not security, peace and a rising standard of living, but increased suspicion, mounting military expenditures, imperialistic adventures and war. . . .

"4. *Victory is not enough.* In order to maintain international peace, political and military programs must be associated with a far-reaching economic program. . . . World-wide economic health is essential to security.

"5. *Prosperity can be achieved by a free people under a regime of social justice.* . . . The basic test of freedom is the welfare of the common man. We hold that under freedom society can be so organized that everyone will have an opportunity to earn his own livelihood.

"6. *Freedom of thought and expression must be safeguarded throughout the world.* . . . In the world community of today we cannot be indifferent to cruelty and oppression, because such indifference strengthens the arm of the oppressor. . . . The growth of freedom throughout the world depends upon the growth of the public conscience, without which laws and international agreements are of no avail. . . .

"7. *Long range plans must be made now.* . . . We are members of one another. Poverty, unemployment and widespread economic insecurity are not endurable in the midst of potential plenty. To organize the economic life of the world so that these possibilities are made actual is the ultimate aim of organized labor. It will be satisfied with no lesser program for the years of peace.

"8. *The foregoing principles define necessary goals and methods of approach to the problem of organizing the world for a just and lasting peace.* . . ."

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ON SOCIAL FRONTIERS

Negro illiteracy has decreased from 70% in 1880 to 10% in 1940, so Dr. Frank P. Graham, president of the University of North Carolina and well known Southern liberal, told students of Tuskegee Institute in his Founders' Day address. He also reported that the Negro life span in the U. S. has increased from 49 to 55 years in the past ten years, that more Negroes were graduated from colleges in the past decade than in all the previous history of the race and that the American Negro has made the greatest progress in the shortest time of any race in human history.

* * *

The huge 81,000,000 gallons-a-year petroleum refinery of the National Refining Company (En-Ar-Co) located at Coffeyville, Kansas has been sold to the Consumers Co-Operative Association and is now being operated by that concern. The co-operative also owns the gasoline refinery located nearby. It also will operate the government-built high octane gasoline refinery in Coffeyville. Arrangements have also been made to erect a \$60,000 mill to process soybeans and flax as soon as equipment is obtainable under its priority rating. The mill will process 1,600 bushels of soybeans daily. The Eastern States Farmers Exchange, an agricultural co-op with headquarters at Springfield, Mass., has paid to its members more than \$1,250,000 in savings on its \$46,897,000 business of 1943. The Co-operative League has launched a "Freedom Fund" to assist European co-operatives to get back into action as various lands are liberated. Trained personnel will also be made available. The rapid expansion of co-operatives threatens to solve the question of 'free enterprise' by the simple process of consumers themselves taking over and operating the means of supplying their own necessities.

* * *

The Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce of the U. S. Department of Commerce has announced that in 1943 American liquor consumers spent more than \$6,000,000,000 for alcoholic beverages, or almost 7% of the total amount expended for all goods and services. Per capita expenditures for liquor rose from \$26 in 1939, to \$39 in 1942, and \$46 in 1943. This is an increase of 80% since 1939. In 1941 and 1942 the rise in per capita expenditure was due chiefly to increase in consumption. But in 1943 the reduced quantity of available liquor was more than offset by sharp price increases. In 1934 approximately two-thirds of the money spent for liquor went for beer. In 1943 beer represented only a little more than 40% of the total.

* * *

For the first time in the history of the St. Louis Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. (Southern Presbyterian), a Negro has been elected moderator. The Rev. Alexander Hamilton Johnson, pastor of McPheeters Presbyterian Church, St. Louis, was elected to that post at the April meeting of the Presbytery. As Moderator, Mr. Johnson will preside over the official body to which all Southern Presbyterian churches in St. Louis report. The Greater Cleveland (Ohio) Ministers Association has elected the Rev. Wade McKinney, pastor of Antioch Baptist Church (Negro) its president. The Greater Cleveland Ministers Association represents the pastors of 385 churches in the area. Toledo, not to be outdone, has elected the Rev. C. A. Ward, pastor of Grace Presbyterian Church (Negro) president of the Toledo Ministers Association. His predecessor, a Negro pastor, recently went into the armed forces and Mr. Ward was elected to fill his place. Los Angeles elected Philip A. Lee, a Chinese, as a delegate to the General Assembly which met in Chicago on May 21.

SELECTIVE SERVICE

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theological or divinity schools which were in existence for more than one year prior to September 16, 1940. Local boards are advised that the list is to be revised from time to time and that absence of any school from the list is not to be taken to mean that it is not a recognized institution. The proper procedure for a local board in such a case is to make inquiry of the state director of Selective Service.

Chief point of difficulty for Disciple ministerial students will be in the matter of satisfying local boards on the point of "the highest authority governing ordination." Historically, among us it would be the local church, but during late years there has been a tendency to bring the committee on ministerial standing of the state board into the ordination picture. There is also the question of whether local draft boards will accept the statement of a local church as sufficient. During the present war emergency the Committee on Ministerial Exemption, appointed by the President of the International Convention, has been handling many cases dealing with exemption and deferment of ministerial students with considerable success. In view of all the circumstances it is recommended that the student secure from the board of elders and pastor of his local church a statement that he is recognized and set apart as a student for the Christian ministry. (This should not be an ordination.) Also, that he secure from the secretary of the state mission board or the chairman of the committee on ministerial standing a statement that he is approved as a candidate for the Christian ministry. File one set of these papers with the local draft board and send the other to the Committee on Ministerial Exemption, 222 South Downey Avenue, Indianapolis 7, Indiana. The committee will examine the papers and if satisfactory will certify the student to the local draft board. Filing duplicate copies of the papers with the Committee on Ministerial will enable that committee to follow through in case appeals are necessary.

INDIANA COUNTY SEAT CHURCH HONORS FARM FAMILIES

The First Christian Church of Spencer, Indiana, observed Rural Life Sunday on May 21st in a manner calculated to strengthen agricultural community. Spencer is the county seat of Owen County, a town of approximately 2000 population. The First Christian Church, Kenneth Brady pastor, has in its membership 21 farm families. Ten days before Rural Life Sunday, Mr. Brady sent a special letter to all farm families in which he said, "We are proud of the families of our church who are living and working on the soil . . . We realize that the roots of our American civilization lie in the rural areas and that the moral and spiritual welfare of our entire nation ultimately depends on the character of those who live closest to the soil . . ." He invited them not only to be in church on Rural Life Sunday, but also to bring another family with them. As a result there were 15 families present. They were seated together in the central section of the sanctuary and each family was presented with a framed copy of "The Christian Farm Family," a litany written by James A. Crain and produced by the Department of Social Welfare and Rural Work. A special hymn, "Here on My Native Soil," written by Edward D. Hamner, president of the Disciples Rural Fellowship, was used in the service.

The example of Mr. Brady is commended to pastors.

ST. PAUL'S SOCIAL GOSPEL—A BOOK REVIEW

The Social Message of the Apostle Paul. By Holmes Rolston, D.D. John Knox Press, \$2.

The 1942 Sprunt Lectures at Union Theological Seminary in Virginia were delivered upon the above theme by the pastor of the West Avenue Presbyterian Church of Charlotte, N. C., an alumnus of the Seminary and of the University of Edinburgh.

Approaching his task from a frankly conservative point of view, the author nevertheless presents a scholarly analysis of Paul's message in a well-balanced fashion. A devoted follower of Barth, he quotes extensively from that source, but the selections chosen support a social view of Christianity with which few will find fault.

In his discussion of the church and the social struggle the author declares that new threats to the life and work of the church always send its prophets to re-examine the records for new insights, that rightly understood the Gospels are more radical than some of the current theories of the nature of society. He also insists that the claim of the church to freedom to develop her own life in harmony with the will of Christ inevitably brings her into conflict with the social order. He quotes Barth with approval, "The Church preaches the Gospel in all the kingdoms of this world. She preaches it also in the Third Reich, but not under it, nor in its spirit." The author holds that as long as the prevailing culture can control the church it has no reason to persecute it. In fact, he thinks that it is possible for the church to become so identified with the culture within which it lives that it becomes one of the main supports of the social order, including its evils. He finds in Paul two principles—a conservative principle and a radical principle. On the conservative side, Paul sees man within an historical situation from which he cannot extricate himself and within which he is compelled to live. The Roman Empire, slavery, the prevailing ideas about God, man, sex, race, caste, poverty, and the like, were historical facts with which Paul had to deal. Dr. Holston declares that the Apostle sought to show Christians how to live *as Christians* within situations which they were unable immediately to change. At this point the radical principle comes into play. Christians were taught to give fealty to the Roman government, but not their ultimate loyalty. He did not denounce slavery, but he imposed upon both master and slave principles of human brotherhood which immediately destroyed the basis of slavery and guaranteed its eventual outlawry in society. In the same way Paul faced other pagan customs—eating of meat offered to idols and then sold in the markets, customs of marriage and sex, economic and political problems, and the like. On the question of race, Paul, with a Jewish-Greek background, was well fitted to oppose Jewish exclusiveness. More than any other Apostle, he saw Christ as breaking down walls that divided mankind. Here, if anywhere, the author allows his Southern prejudices to get the better of his scholarship, though the scholar never quite abdicates in favor of the Southerner. Much can be forgiven an author who writes, "The basic criticism of the church would be that all too often she has settled herself to live comfortably and complacently in a racial situation which she must feel to be unchristian. The church is not true to her inner life when she has ceased to be in tension with that in her environment which is not Christian." This is a book which ministers will find stimulating and satisfying and which in the hands of Christian laymen will cause a lot of heart-searching.

AFL PREPARES FOR POST WAR RECONSTRUCTION

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The program based on the above stated principles includes the following: "(1) Security; . . . unilateral action and regional understandings are valid only when in accordance with the measures taken by the General International Organization and conform to the basic principles of the Atlantic Charter . . . (2) Livelihood: . . . The United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration is deserving of universal support. . . . The aim of relief should be to make it possible for peoples who have suffered in the war to become self-supporting. . . . A certain number of international functional agencies will be necessary to insure the consistent development of sound economic policies. . . . The International Labor Office has abundantly justified its existence. . . . The Food and Agricultural Organization which has now been planned receives the full support of labor. . . . there should be agencies to deal with such problems as . . . foreign exchange, communications, commercial policy, including cartels, fiscal policies, access to national resources . . . there should be a United Nations Economic Organization to coordinate these activities. . . . (3) Justice: . . . The Permanent Court of International Justice (World Court) should be adopted as the supreme judicial tribunal. . . . The scope of arbitration should include economic as well as political disputes. . . . there should be a permanent international institute to study . . . principles and procedures of international justice with respect to groups and individuals."

The action of the American Federation as summarized above compares favorably with many of the utterances of the Delaware Conference, the Malvern Conference and other statements on post-war world issued by religious groups. This labor statement is especially recommended to Disciple groups studying "The Church and the New World Mind."

TO GET READY FOR COMING CRIME WAVE

In order to be prepared for a crime wave which it believes will follow the war, the Federal Bureau of Investigation will double its enrollment at its Police Academy this summer, so E. E. Conroy, head of the New York FBI told a convention of National Armored Car Operators in New York. (*Time*, April 3) Increased crime will result from: (1) the present increase in juvenile delinquency; (2) drafting of young policeman; (3) return of ten million soldiers who have been trained to kill, with Commandos presenting a special menace due to the fact that they have been trained to kill "skillfully and soundlessly."

Entirely too little concern is manifested over the training of thousands of young men in Commando tactics. A former British Commando officer, now on inspection duty in this country, confessed recently to a mid-Western minister that he does not allow himself to go in crowds at night where he might be jostled or shoved because, he said, "I know eleven ways to kill a man in thirty seconds so that the victim will never know who killed him." Having been trained to react instantly and to give full sweep to his automatic reactions, he did not permit himself to go into situations where there might be an impulse to use his deadly training.

We have sown to the wind, shall we not expect to reap the whirlwind? If we honor men for spreading stealthy death in wartime shall we blame them if they practice in peacetime what we have taught them?